meet the author

Mulk Raj Anand
I believe that creating literature is the true medium of humanism as against systematic philosophies... The broken bundle of mirrors of the human personality in our time can become the enchanted mirror only if the sensibility is touched in its utmost pain, and sheer pleasure, in tenderest moments.

Mulk Raj Anand was born in Peshawar, in 1905, in a family of traditional copper and silver craftsmen; his father who had educated himself worked in the Dogra regiment, and his mother though unlettered was well-versed in folklore and was "a born revolutionary" who had a deep influence on her son. He was educated in cantonment schools and Khalsa College, Amritsar, where, influenced by Gandhiji's writings, he participated in the Civil Disobedience campaign of 1921. He was jailed for a brief spell, and fled to Bombay to escape his father's wrath. Here he made his living writing notes and reviews for the Bombay Chronicle. Persuaded to return to Amritsar to take his exams, he became further involved with the nationalist struggle, and was again jailed; a scandal about a Muslim girl with whom he fell in love was the last straw, and the young man, barely twenty now, fled to Britain.

The years in England were as rich and as dramatic. Mulk Raj Anand took a Ph.D in the philosophy of Locke, Hume, Berkeley and Russell at University College, London, and he was taught by G. Dawes Hicks, G.E. Moore, C.D. Broad, and S. Radhakrishnan. Other fruitful interactions were with such leading literary figures as T.S. Eliot, Herbert Read, E.M. Foster, Aldous Huxley, Stephen Spender, George Orwell, the writers of the Bloomsbury group, Lawrence Durrell, Andre Malraux and Bonamy Dobree. The writings of Tolstoy, Ruskin, Morris, and Gandhi had led him to socialism, and he took an active part in the coal-miner's strike in Britain, and later the antifascist struggle in Spain.

Dr. Anand returned to India in early 1946, to carry on his crusade for social change; he started the art magazine, Marg soon after his return, and has since put himself out tirelessly to protect and promote the liberal, humanistic values so dear to his heart. He lives in Bombay, but travels extensively throughout India to take a leading role in all movements meant to enhance the quality and integrity of Indian
life. If his early experiences and creative life are inextricably intertwined with India's Freedom Struggle, his present concerns are equally inextricably interwoven in working for the cultural, social, and political emancipation of the people. He continues to inspire a large number of young people to whom he is affectionately known as "Uncle Mulki".

Mulki Raj Anand's first five books suffice to provide some indication of his wide range of interests, and his extraordinary scholarship. His first book is on Persian paintings, the second on Indian cooking, the third is a work of literary criticism, that attracted considerable attention overseas, the fourth a study of the Hindu view of art, and the fifth, the well-known literary classic Untouchable (1935).

The story of Untouchable is itself as dramatic as anything from the author's life: it was written over a long weekend, pouring out, as the author describes it "like hot lava from the volcano of my crazed imagination"; it was given new direction in Sabarmati Ashram by Gandhi, rejected for over four years by nineteen publishers, and the author was so dejected that he even considered suicide; it was finally accepted by a small publisher, only because E.M Foster agreed to write an introduction to it. Now, over five decades later, it is an acknowledged modern world classic of literature, and has been translated into scores of languages.

The Coolie which shares with Untouchable the author's fierce anger at social inequity was published the following year. Two Leaves and a Bud, set in a tea-estate in Assam, explores the plight of indentured labourers. The Village, Across the Black Waters, and The Sword and the Sickle tell the story of Lal Singh, as he flees from his farm and joins the army, and returns after the Second World war to political struggle in his homeland.

The Big Heart and Private Life of an Indian Prince are markedly different in theme. The first explores the conflict between man and machine, the traditional and the modern, integrating also the wide range of Dr. Anand's social, economic and political concerns; the second, is a tale of a Maharaja's obsessive passion for an illiterate and promiscuous hill-woman.

The Old Woman and the Cow, The Road, and the Death of a Hero, were written in the sixties, and while they retain the author's fierce and passionate concern for the marginalised, also display a greater stylistic virtuosity.
Four of the seven autobiographical novels which Dr. Anand has proposed to write, have now been published. They are: Seven Summers, Morning Face (which won the Sahitya Akademi award), Confessions of a Lover (winner of the E.M. Foster Award), and The Bubble. These works are significant not only for the quality of the writing, nor only because they contain portraits and narratives about the writer, but also because they reflect one of the most exciting periods of our history.

Dr. Anand has also published eight volumes of short stories and forty-three other books, including books for children. The subjects range from Erotic sculpture, Indian theatre, Tagore's aesthetics, to Education, and the role of English in Free India. He has edited 18 books, also on a variety of subjects.

Mulk Raj Anand has received several honours and recognition from different quarters for the quality and wide range of contributions he has made. He has received, apart from the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Leverhulme Fellowship, the World Peace Council Prize, and the Padma Bhushan. The Fellowship of the Sahitya Akademi, the nation's highest literary honour was conferred on him in 1989.

What most distinguishes Mulk Raj Anand, however, is his enormous accessibility to those in need, his generosity of spirit, the immediacy with which he responds to public issues which bear upon humanistic values, and his commitment to the unity of India, and global peace. Of him it might truly be said that he is a citizen of the world.

### A Chronology

- **1905**: Born Peshawar
- **1924**: B.A. (Honours) Khalsa College, Amritsar, Punjab University
- **1929**: Ph.D. from University of London
- **1930**: At Cambridge University
- **1931**: Lecturer League of Nations School of Intellectual Co-operation, Geneva
- **1932**: Lecturer Workers Educational Association, London
- **1939**: Married Kathleen Van Gelder (divorced 1948)
- **1940**: Leverhulme Fellowship
- **1946**: Editor MARG magazine
- **1948**: Taught at Universities of Punjab, Benares, Rajasthan and Jaipur
- **1950**: Married Shirin Vajdar
- **1952**: World Peace Council Prize
- **1963**: Tagore Professor of Literature and Fine Art, University of Punjab
- **1965**: Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi (National Academy of Art)
- **1967**: Visiting Professor, Institute of Advanced Studies, Simla
- **1968**: Padma Bhushan, India
- **1970**: President, Lokayata Trust, Hauz Khas, New Delhi
- **1971**: Sahitya Akademi Award for Morning Face novel
- **1989**: Fellow, Sahitya Akademi

![Anand shooting picture: Lost Child](image)
A Select Bibliography

Novels

Untouchable London: Wishart, 1935
The Coolie London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1936
Two Leaves and a Bud London: Lawrence and Wishar, 1937
The Village London: Cape, 1939
Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts Lucknow: Naya Sansar, 1939
Across the Black Waters London: Cape, 1940
The Sword and the Sickle London: Cape, 1942
The Big Heart London: Hutchinson, 1945
Seven Summers: the Story of an Indian Childhood London: Hutchinson, 1951
The Old Woman and the Cow Bombay: Kutub, 1960
The Road Bombay: Kutub, 1963
Morning Face Bombay: Kutub, 1968
Confession of a Lover New Delhi: Arnon Lehnemann, 1976
The Bubble New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1984

Play

India Speaks produced London, 1949

Short Stories

The Lost Child and Other Stories London: J.A. Allen, 1934
The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories London: Cape, 1944
The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories Bombay: Thacker, 1947
Reflections on the Golden Bed Bombay: Current Book House, 1947
The Power of Darkness and Other Stories Bombay: Jaico, 1958
Lajwanth and Other Stories Bombay: Jaico, 1966
Between Tears and Laughter New Delhi: Sterling, 1973

Books on Arts

Persian Painting London: Faber, 1930
The Hindu View of Art Bombay: Asia Publishing House 1933
How to Test a Picture; Lectures on Seeing Versus Looking 1935
The Third Eye: a lecture on the appreciation of art Patiala: University of Punjab, 1940
Essays on Jamini Roy, Amrita Shergil and Poet Painter Rabindranat Tagore, 1950
Kama Kala Some notes on the Philosophical Basis of Hindu Erotic Sculpture London: Skilton, 1958

India in Colour Bombay: Taraporewala, 1959

The Volcano Some comments on the development of Rabindranath Tagore's Aesthetic Theories Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University, 1968

Indian Paintings New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1973

Seven Little Known Birds of Inner Eye Rutland, Vermont: Witles, 1978

Books for Children

Indian Fairy Tales Retold, Bombay: Kutub, 1946

The Story of India Bombay: Kutub, 1948

The Story of Man New Delhi: Sikh Publishing House, 1952

More Indian Fairy Tales Bombay: Kutub, 1961

The Story of Chacha Nehru New Delhi: Rajpal, 1965

Mora New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1972

Maya of Mohenjo-daro New Delhi: Children Book Trust

Street Games of India New Delhi: National Book Trust

The King Emperor's English or

The Role of the English Language in the Free India, Bombay:

Chitra Laxana The Story of Indian Painting New Delhi: National Book Trust

Criticism/Non Fiction

The Golden Breath Studies in Five poets of the New India. London: Murray, 1933

Letters on India London: Routledge, 1942


Homage to Tagore Lahore: Sangam, 1946

On Education Bombay: Hind Kitabs, 1947

Hind Kitabs, 1948

Lines Written to an Indian Air: Essays Bombay, Nalanda, 1940

The Indian Theatre London: Dobson, 1950

Is there a Contemporary Indian Civilisation? Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963

Conversations in Bloomsbury (reminiscences) New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1981


With B.K. Bhattacharyya & I.N. Choudhuri